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Letter dated 30 April 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued on 30 April 2003 regarding the release of the "road map" to peace in the Middle East by the members of the Quartet of international mediators — the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations.

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex were distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sergey **Lavrov**

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Annex to the letter dated 30 April 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation regarding the release of the "road map" to peace in the Middle East by the members of the Quartet of international mediators — the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations

On 30 April 2003, the members of the Quartet of international mediators for a Middle East settlement — the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations — released to the Government of Israel and the Palestine National Administration the "road map" for making progress towards establishing comprehensive peace in the Middle East, within the framework of which two States — Israel and Palestine — would exist side by side in peace and security.

The agreed approach of the Quartet is that the "road map" is the best path towards peace, the point of departure for Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and a framework programme of action. In order to ensure its successful implementation, the conflicting sides must clearly demonstrate their agreement with the objectives laid down, show political will and conscientiously carry out the obligations that they have undertaken.

Moscow is convinced that it is possible to put an end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict only through mutual recognition of the principle of achieving a settlement through negotiations, a halt to violence and terrorism, and also efforts to normalize the lives of the Palestinians. Active steps are also required by the regional States concerned in supporting and assisting the two sides in achieving these goals. It is our belief that such a process will end the occupation that began in 1967, create a sovereign, independent, peace-loving and democratic Palestinian State and establish lasting peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours on the basis of the principles of the Madrid Conference, United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002), the agreements and understandings reached earlier, and also the Arab peace initiative approved by the League of Arab States in Beirut.

30 April 2003